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APR 24 2008

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated January 24, 2008. Claims 1 to 14 are in the application, with Claims 1, 10, and 14 being independent. Claim 1 and 10 have been amended herein. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3, and 5 to 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 6,175,075 (Shiotsuka), and Claims 2 and 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Shiotsuka. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

According to a feature of the invention as recited by Claims 1 and 10, the coating film does not cover a top surface of the electrode portion.

Shiotsuka is not seen to disclose or suggest at least the above-discussed feature.

According to features of the invention as recited by Claim 14, (i) the electrode portion is provided outside of a power generation region of the photovoltaic element, and (ii) the coating film covers the power generation region and the collector electrodes.

Shiotsuka also is not seen to disclose or suggest the above-discussed features recited by Claim 14.

The Examiner takes the position that Shiotsuka's metallic wire 406(a) and coating layer 406(b) correspond, respectively to the electrode portion and coating film of the present invention. However, Applicants respectfully submit that the coating layer 406(a) is provided inside of a power generation region of the photovoltaic element. See Fig. 4 of Shiotsuka. Further, Applicants respectfully submit that the coating layer 406(b)

does not cover the power generation region and the collector electrodes. The Office Action points to an entirely different layer (EVA sheet 122) for this feature.

The dependent claims are also submitted to be patentable because they set forth additional aspects of the present invention and are dependent from the independent claims discussed above. Therefore, separate and individual consideration of each dependent claim is respectfully requested.

REQUEST FOR INTERVIEW

If upon consideration of this Amendment, the Examiner still has concerns as to the patentability of the claims, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact Applicants' undersigned representative to arrange an interview.

CONCLUSION

The application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office by telephone at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,



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